

NORTHERN PIKE

Old Fish, New Fishing Opportunities

By Greg Power

Photo Omitted

Avid anglers have recognized for some time that North Dakota has a lot more lakes than it did 12 years ago – 341 in 2001 as compared to 170 in 1991 – and many of these newer waters support healthy fish populations.

While these waters hold a variety of fish, one species garnering interest for both open-water and ice-anglers – call it renewed interest, if you will – is the northern pike, the official state fish.

Due to unprecedented wet conditions in the 1990s, new lakes were either created or older lakes and reservoirs were enhanced with high volumes of runoff. Vegetation routinely flooded with high water provided quality spawning and rearing habitat for northern pike.

Some new lakes were stocked with pike by North Dakota Game and Fish Department biologists, in others fish made their way into the “new” waters via over-land drainage from neighboring streams. Regardless of their origin, most pike born from 1994-99 found productive environments with lots of food. Growth rates during the 1990s in many cases were exceptional, producing pike up to 18 inches in their first summer.

Today, many of these fish still reside in North Dakota’s waters, and some of them now exceed 20 pounds. In recent years, anglers have taken advantage of this resource across the state, and good opportunities for outstanding pike fishing still exist.

To aid anglers in locating waters with healthy northern pike populations, Game and Fish biologists developed the following list of pike waters. Though this list does not include all North Dakota waters where pike are found, it does include waters where generally good pike fishing could be expected this winter and into next year.

NORTHERN PIKE PROSPECTS

(Numbers correspond to map on pages 12-13.)

- 1. Blacktail Dam (Williams County)** – 5 miles north, 5 miles west and 1 mile north of the north junction of Highways 2 and 85. Strong population of 3-12 pound fish, with some exceeding 20 pounds. Approximate size, 160 acres. Maximum depth, 36 feet.
- 2. Cottonwood Lake (Williams County)** – Immediately east of Alamo. Abundant 3-8 pound fish, with some up to 20 pounds. Approximate size, 225 acres. Maximum depth, 12 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)
- 3. Trenton Lake (Williams County)** – Immediately south of Trenton. Abundant 3-10 pound fish. Approximate size, 600 acres. Maximum depth 8 feet at normal water level.
- 4. Tanberg Dam (Divide County)** – 10 miles south, 1/2 mile east and 1/2 mile south of Noonan. Abundant 3-8 pound fish. Approximate size, 50 acres. Maximum depth, 10 feet, except for a 24-foot area in a small excavated portion.
- 5. McLeod Lake (Williams County)** – Immediately south and west of Ray. Abundant 4-8 pound fish. Approximate size, 55 acres. Maximum depth, 34 feet.
- 6. Tioga Reservoir (Williams County)** – Just north of Tioga. Abundant 3-8 pound fish. Approximate size, 80 acres. Maximum depth, 30 feet.
- 7. Smishek Lake (Burke County)** – 4 miles northwest of Powers Lake. Contains some pike of more than 20 pounds. Approximate size, 200 acres. Maximum depth, 26 feet.
- 8. Powers Lake (Burke County)** – Immediately south and east of the city of Powers Lake. Abundant 4-10 pound fish, with some up to 20 pounds. Approximate size, 1,650 acres. Maximum depth, 10 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)
- 9. Stanley Reservoir (Mountrail County)** – 1 mile south of Stanley. Abundant 3-8 pound fish. Approximate size, 250 acres. Maximum depth, 10 feet.
- 10. Lake Sakakawea** – Very good population of pike including fish of more than 20 pounds. Approximate size, 280,000 acres. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)
- 11. Odland Dam (Golden Valley County)** – 7 miles north of Beach. Fair pike population. Approximate size, 110 acres. Maximum depth, 16 feet.
- 12. Cedar Lake (Slope County)** – 13 miles north and 2 miles west of Reeder. Fair pike population. Approximate size, 200 acres. Maximum depth, 16 feet.
- 13. Makoti Lake (Ward County)** – 5 miles south of Makoti. Approximate size, 290 acres. Maximum depth, 15 feet.
- 14. North Carlson (Ward County)** – 8 miles east of Ryder. Approximate size, 80 acres. Maximum depth, 23 feet.
- 15. South Carlson (Ward County)** – 8 miles east of Ryder. Approximate size, 135 acres. Maximum depth, 22 feet.
- 16. Danzig Dam (Morton County)** – 2 miles north, 1 mile west and 1/2 mile north of Bluegrass/Interstate 94 interchange (Exit 120). Fair pike population. Approximate size, 150 acres. Maximum depth, 10 feet.
- 17. Brush Lake (McLean County)** – 3 miles north of Mercer. Approximate size, 275 acres. Maximum depth, 19 feet.
- 18. Crooked Lake (McLean County)** – 11 miles north and 1/2 mile east of Turtle Lake. Approximate size, 375 acres. Maximum depth, 15 feet.
- 19. Long Lake (McLean County)** – 13 miles north and 2 miles east of Turtle Lake. Approximate size, 205 acres. Maximum depth, 8 feet.
- 20. Camp Lake (McLean County)** – 17 miles north and 2 miles east of Turtle Lake. Approximate size, 80 acres. Maximum depth, 13 feet.
- 21. Cottonwood Lake (McHenry County)** – 2 1/2 miles north of Butte. Approximate size, 215 acres. Maximum depth, 12 feet.
- 22. George Lake (McHenry County)** – 14 miles north and 1 mile east of Drake. Approximate size, 85 acres. Maximum depth, 30 feet.
- 23. Buffalo Lodge Lake (McHenry County)** – 1 mile east, 3 miles north and 2 miles east of Granville. Approximate size, 1,380 acres. Maximum depth, 14 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)
- 24. Long Lake (Bottineau County)** – 1 mile east of Bottineau, 11 miles north, 4 miles east, 1 mile south, 3 miles east, 1 mile south and 1 mile west. Good numbers of pike, most under 5 pounds. Approximate size, 250 acres. Maximum depth, 26 feet.
- 25. Carpenter Lake (Rolette County)** – 12 miles west of St. John. Healthy pike population, with some bigger fish. Approximate size, 760 acres. Maximum depth, 15 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

- 26. School Section Lake (Rolette County)** – 9 miles north and 2 1/2 miles east of Dunseith. Nice pike population, with fish up to about 8 pounds. Approximate size, 295 acres. Maximum depth, 13 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)
- 27. Lake Upsilon (Rolette County)** – 6 miles west and 1 mile north of St. John. Good pike population. Approximate size, 425 acres. Maximum depth, 26 feet.
- 28. Gravel Lake (Rolette County)** – 6 miles west and 1/2 mile north of St. John. Good pike fishing opportunities. Approximate size, 105 acres. Maximum depth, 22 feet.
- 29. Island Lake (Rolette County)** – 6 miles north of Wolford. High pike numbers, with fish up to about 8 pounds. Approximate size, 1,980 acres. Maximum depth, 12 feet.
- 30. Buffalo Lake (Pierce County)** – 4 miles west of Esmond. High numbers of pike. Approximate size, 400 acres. Maximum depth, 14 feet.
- 31. Coal Mine Lake (Sheridan County)** – 10 miles south, 3 miles east and 1 mile south of Anamoose. Approximate size, 630 acres. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

Photo Omitted

32. Lake Irvine/Mauvais Coulee (Ramsey County) – 1/2 mile east of Churchs Ferry. High numbers of pike, most under 5 pounds. Approximate size, 2,950 acres. Maximum depth, 8 feet.

33. Silver Lake (Benson County) – 7 miles north, 1 mile west and 1 mile north of Minnewaukan. Good numbers of pike, with some big fish. Approximate size, 400 acres. Maximum depth, 8 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

34. Morrison/Sweetwater Lakes (Ramsey County) – 3 miles east and 2 miles south of Webster. High numbers of pike, with most under 5 pounds. Approximate size, 3,500 acres. Maximum depth, 8 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

35. Devils Lake (Ramsey County) – Good chance of catching some 6 -10 pound pike. Approximate size, 100,000 acres. Maximum depth, 53 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

36. Matejcek Dam (Walsh County) – 6 miles south of Lankin. Some big pike. Approximate size, 130 acres. Maximum depth, 40 feet.

37. Lake Laretta (Nelson County) – 3 miles north and 2 miles west of Michigan. Big pike available. Approximate size, 1,050 acres. Maximum depth, 20 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

38. Battle Lake (Eddy County) – 1/2 mile south, 1 1/2 miles west and 1 1/2 miles south of Hamar. Good numbers of pike. Approximate size, 190 acres. Maximum depth, 8 feet.



Brian Hosek

39. Sibley Lake (Griggs County) – 1 mile west and 3 miles south of Binford. Good pike population, with many fish up to 8 pounds. Approximate size, 950 acres. Maximum depth, 13 feet.

40. Lake Helen (Kidder County) – 2 1/2 miles west and 6 miles north of Tuttle. Approximate size, 920 acres. Maximum depth, 20 feet.

41. Arena/Harriet Lake (Burleigh County) – 8 miles west and 1 mile south of Tuttle. Approximate size, 2,000 acres. Maximum depth, 12 feet.

42. Mallard Marsh (Stutsman County) – 9 miles north and 1 mile east of Woodworth. Approximate size, 1,800 acres. Maximum depth unknown. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

43. Barnes Lake (Stutsman County) – 1 mile east and 6 miles north of Woodworth. Approximate size, 530 acres. Maximum depth, 12 feet.

44. Clark Lake (Stutsman County) – 5 miles west and 2 miles north of Woodworth. Approximate size, 390 acres. Maximum depth, 21 feet.

45. Horsehead Lake (Kidder County) – 1 1/2 miles west and 5 miles south of Robinson. Approximate size, 6,780 acres. Maximum depth unknown. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

46. Braddock Dam (Emmons County) – 2 miles southwest of Braddock. Approximate size, 90 acres. Maximum depth, 18 feet. Eradicated in 1997.

47. Rice Lake (Emmons County) – 6 miles south of Strasburg. Approximate size, 1,000 acres. Maximum depth, 15 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

48. Jakes Lake (Emmons County) – 5 miles south and 1 mile east of Strasburg. Approximate size, 565 acres. Maximum depth, 10 feet.

49. West Lake (Logan County) – 1 mile west of Napoleon. Approximate size, 2,750 acres. Maximum depth, 13 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

50. Wolf Lake (McIntosh County) – 3 1/2 miles north and 1/2 mile east of Zeeland. Approximate size, 690 acres. Maximum depth unknown.

51. Beaver Lake (Logan County) – 8 miles south and 8 miles east of Napoleon. Approximate size, 960 acres. Maximum depth, 7 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

52. Clear Lake (McIntosh County) – 6 miles east and 2 miles south of Wishek. Approximate size, 210 acres. Maximum depth, 10 feet.

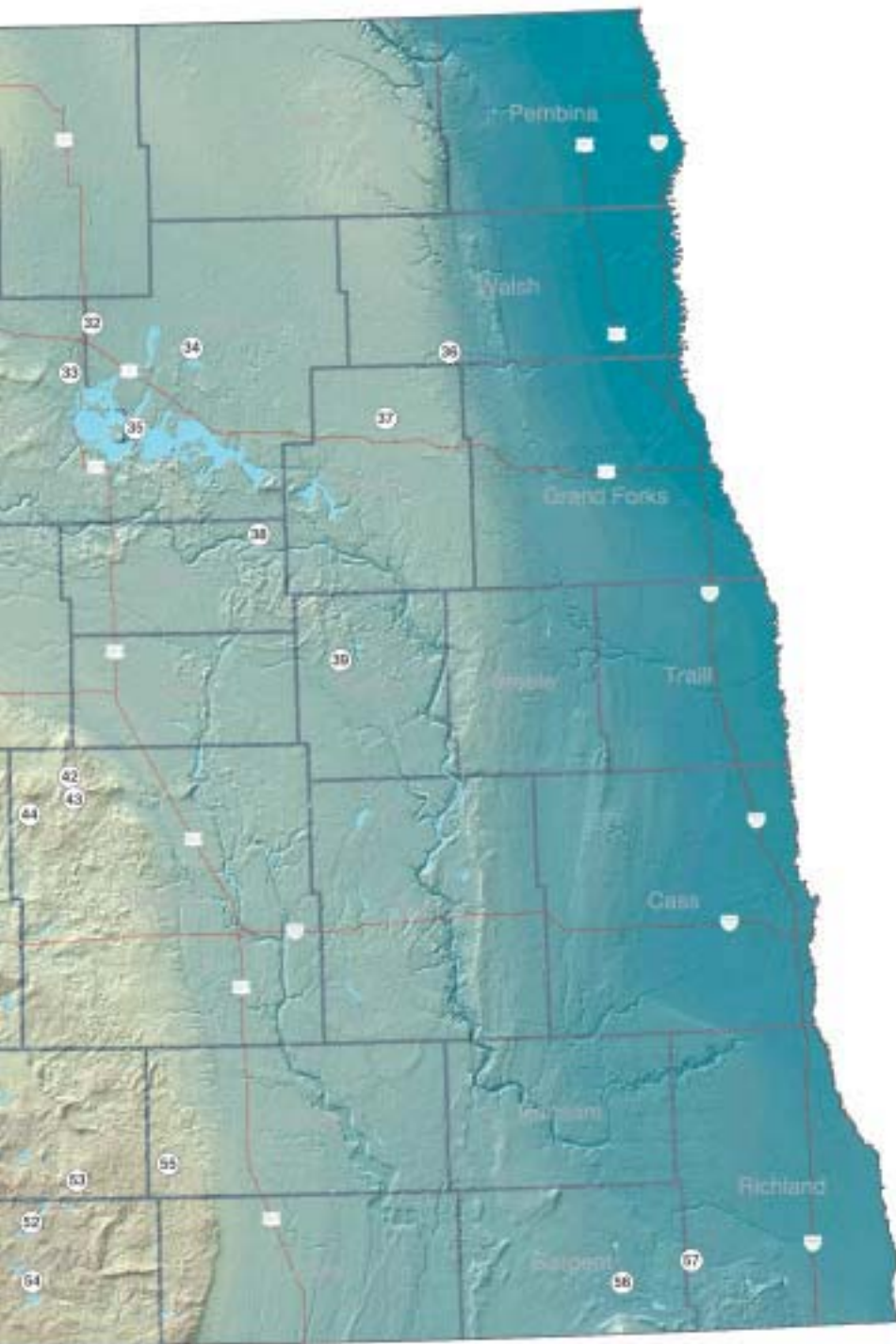
53. Mundt Lake (Logan County) – 3 miles east, 4 miles north, 1 mile east and 1 mile south of Lehr. Approximate size, 280 acres. Maximum depth, 11 feet.

54. Dry Lake (McIntosh County) – 3 miles west and 3 1/2 miles north of Ashley. Approximate size, 5,125 acres. Maximum depth, 27 feet.

55. Flood Lake (LaMoure County) – 3 miles north of Kulm. Approximate size, 1,060 acres. Maximum depth, 16 feet. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)

56. Guleson Lake (Sargent County) – 1 mile east of Rutland. Approximate size, 55 acres. Maximum depth, 12 feet.

57. Grass Lake (Richland County) – 3 miles west, 2 miles north and 1 mile west of Lidgerwood. Approximate size, 615 acres. Maximum depth unknown. (Open to darkhouse spearfishing)



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